Amendments to the Specification:

Page 1, after the title and before the first paragraph, please insert the following subheading:

FIELD AND BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Page 6, before the paragraph beginning at line 25, please insert the following subheading:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Page 20, before the paragraph beginning at line 30, please insert the following subheading:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Page 27, lines 3-14 should be amended to read as follows:

A strategy similar to that used for Tat101 and Tat86 was used to synthesize:

- 18 overlapping peptides 15 amino acids in length, covering the sequence of Tat101,
- the Tat86 derivatives in which each of the seven cysteines of the cysteine-rich region is substituted to serine (Tat86Ser, control) or to a hydrophobic amino acid, such as leucine (Tat86C(22-37)L), a phenylalanine (Tat86C(22-37)F) or a tryptophan (Tat86C(22-37)W),
- the Tat101 derivative in which each of the arginines at positions 52 and 53 is substituted to glutamine (Tat101R(52,53)Q).

Page 31, line 38, please amend to read as follows:

c)~~d)~~ Analysis of the antibody response induced by Tat

Page 32, lines 30-31, please amend to read as follows:

d)~~e)~~ Antigenic profile of the sera produced by immunization with Tat101 and Tat101/Hep6000

Page 38, lines 30-37, please amend to read as follows:

The role of hydrophobic groups in the increase in the immunogenicity of Tat was demonstrated by studying the immunogenicity of a Tat86 molecule in which the 7 cysteines are substituted, respectively, with leucines (Tat86C(22-37)L), phenylalanines (Tat86C(22-37)F) or tryptophans (Tat86C(22-37)W), by comparison with a Tat molecule in which the 7 cysteines are replaced with serines (Tat86C(22-37)S) (Figure 10).